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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Forty-ninth session

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its forty-eighth session in October 1997, the Executive Committee adopted a decision on the programme of work of the Standing Committee in 1998 (A/AC.96/895, paragraph 24) in which it set out the issues to be examined by the Standing Committee.

2. In accordance with Executive Committee Working Methods adopted at the forty-sixth session (A/AC.96/860, paragraph 32), the Standing Committee held four meetings in the course of 1998: in February, April, June and September/October 1998. A planning meeting of Executive Committee members in December 1997 established the calendar of meetings and determined the distribution of the different agenda items (see Annex I).

3. A detailed account of the work undertaken at each of the meetings of the Standing Committee is contained in the following reports: A/AC.96/896: *Report of the Tenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (2-3 February 1998)*; A/AC.96/897: *Report of the Eleventh Meeting of the Standing Committee (28-29 April 1998)*; A/AC.96/905: *Report of the Twelfth Meeting of the Standing Committee (23-25 June 1998)*; A/AC.96/909: *Report of the Thirteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (8-9 September and 2 October 1998)*.

Issues covered by the Standing Committee in 1998

4. The work undertaken by the Standing Committee included a number of recurrent items. As foreseen in the Decision on Budget Structure and Governance (A/AC.96/860, paragraph 22(l)), in-depth reviews of UNHCR programmes and activities in different regions were conducted at each of the meetings, allowing the Standing Committee to oversee more effectively the

evolution of General and Special Programmes in the areas concerned. Central Asia, South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East were reviewed in February; Europe and former Yugoslavia in April; Africa in June; and the Americas and Asia and the Pacific in September.

5. In addition, the Standing Committee considered at each of its meetings regular updates on overall programme and funding issues, through which it kept abreast of the situation in terms of General and Special Programme budgets, funding, and allocations made from the various criteria funds (programme reserve, emergency fund and voluntary repatriation fund). In October, the Standing Committee reviewed a proposal for a new UNHCR budget structure, the result of consultations with Members and Observers of the Standing Committee during the year.

6. At its various meetings, the Standing Committee also reviewed programme policy issues. In February it examined new approaches to reintegration. In June, it reviewed UNHCR's efforts on behalf of refugee women, and in September and October it looked at developments within UNHCR in respect to elderly refugees and refugee children, including UNHCR's strategy for follow-up to the report on the impact of armed conflict on children, as well as a quantitative assessment of the economic and social impact of massive refugee populations on host developing countries on the basis of special case studies and a report resulting from a series of consultations on the nature and extent of UNHCR's involvement in reintegration activities, especially in regard to societies emerging from conflict.

7. In accordance with Executive Committee Working Methods (A/AC.96/865, paragraph 32(d)), the June meeting of the Standing Committee focused particularly on questions of international protection. Two days were devoted to consideration of the Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/882), which focused on the spectrum of the refugee experience in light of human rights principles, including the causes of refugee flows, asylum and the return of refugees to their country of origin. In addition, issues relating to resettlement, the application of the exclusion clauses, and composite flows and their relationship to refugee outflows, including return of persons not in need of international protection, as well as facilitation of return in its global dimension, were reviewed, as was a progress report on the informal consultations on international protection for all who need it. Conclusions resulting from the Standing Committee's consideration of these protection issues are being submitted to the forty-ninth session for adoption.

8. In light of the Secretary-General's United Nations reform proposals and related ECOSOC decisions, the Standing Committee in April reviewed UNHCR's efforts to situate itself within the United Nations system-wide reform process.

9. In terms of issues of oversight identified by the Executive Committee, in February the Standing Committee examined procurement and asset management within UNHCR, in April it looked at the use of consultants, in June it reviewed issues relating to programme and financial management, and in October the issue of implementing partners compliance with audit certification was reviewed. The Standing Committee also considered an evaluation of UNHCR's phase-out strategies in April as part of a continued discussion on new approaches to reintegration, including UNHCR's contribution to rehabilitation programmes in post-conflict societies.

10. A review of Executive Committee working methods, including programmes and their implementation, was undertaken by the Standing Committee in April. In line with Executive Committee working methods, the Standing Committee also undertook the selection of the annual theme for the forty-ninth session of the Executive Committee during its two sessions in April and June, adopting the theme of "international solidarity and burden-sharing in all its aspects: national, regional and international responsibilities for refugees".

11. With regard to management, financial and human resources matters, the Standing Committee was kept regularly apprised, by means of written and oral reports, of progress made in UNHCR's change management process. The Standing Committee also examined the overhead costs of non-governmental organization (NGO) implementing partners, training and the safety of UNHCR staff.

12. In addition, the Standing Committee undertook a preliminary review, in the light of the Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) (A/AC.96/900/Add.3), of the budgetary and financial documentation being presented to the forty-ninth session of the Executive Committee.

Standing Committee decisions

13. In accordance with the authority vested in it by the Executive Committee, the Standing Committee adopted a number of decisions on matters included in its programme of work. The texts of these decisions are annexed to the reports of the different Standing Committee meetings, as follows:

A/AC.96/896: *Report of the Tenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (2-3 February 1998)*

- Decision on Programme and Funding Projections

A/AC.96/897: *Report of the Eleventh Meeting of the Standing Committee (28-29 April 1998)*

- Decision on Overhead Costs of International NGO Partners

A/AC.96/905: *Report of the Twelfth Meeting of the Standing Committee (23-25 June 1998)*

- Decision on Programme and Funding Projections
- Decision on Annual Theme of the Forty-ninth Session of the Executive Committee

Plenary decisions: preparation of drafts by the Standing Committee

14. On the basis of discussions undertaken in the course of the year, and in accordance with the Executive Committee's working methods, the Standing Committee initiated the preparation of draft decisions and conclusions for submission to the forty-ninth session of the Executive Committee. In a series of informal consultations under the chairmanship of the Rapporteur, the following draft decisions and conclusions have been discussed;

- General Conclusion on International Protection (item 5[1])
- Decision on Informal Consultations on Protection Issues (item 5)
- General Decision on Programme, Administrative and Financial Matters (item 5)
- Decision on Reintegration (item 5)
- Conclusion on the Follow-up to the CIS Conference (item 5)
- Decision on Programme of Work of the Standing Committee in 1999 (item 8)
- Decision on Government Observer Participation in 1998-1999 (item 8)
- Decision on the Provisional Agenda of the Fiftieth Session (item 9)

[1] Numbers refer to items on the agenda of the forty-ninth session of the Executive Committee.

CALENDAR

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STANDING COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 1998

	10th Meeting 2 - 3 February	11th Meeting 28 - 29 April	12th Meeting 23 - 25 June	13th Meeting 8 - 9 September
PROGRAMME AND FUNDING MATTERS	• Update on programmes and funding	• Update on programmes and funding • Review of General Programmes	• Update on programmes and funding	• Registration and statistics
SITUATION REPORTS	• CASWANAME • Other important developments	• Europe and the former Yugoslavia • Other important developments	• Africa (3 reports) • Other important developments	• Americas and Asia and the Pacific • Other important developments
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION			• Note on International Protection • Resettlement • Application of exclusion clauses (oral report) • Composite flows • Progress report on Gap consultations	
PROTECTION/ PROGRAMME POLICY ISSUES	• New approaches to reintegration		• Refugee women (oral report)	• Refugee children and adolescents • Elderly refugees • Economic and social impact of massive refugee populations on host developing countries, as well as other countries; a quantitative assessment on the basis of special case studies
COORDINATION ISSUES		• Follow-up to the Secretary-General's United Nations reform proposals and related ECOSOC decisions		
OVERSIGHT ISSUES	• Procurement and asset management	• Consultants • Phase-out strategies (continuation of debate on new approaches to reintegration, including UNHCR's contribution to rehabilitation programmes in post-conflict societies)	• Programme and financial management	

	10th Meeting 2 - 3 February	11th Meeting 28 - 29 April	12th Meeting 23 - 25 June	13th Meeting 8 - 9 September
GOVERNANCE ISSUES		• Selection of annual theme for the forty-ninth session of the Executive Committee • Review of Executive Committee Working Methods, including programmes and their implementation	• Selection of annual theme for the forty-ninth session of the Executive Committee	
MANAGEMENT, FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES MATTERS	• Outsourcing (oral report) • Update on Project Delphi	• Overhead costs of international NGO implementing partners • Training • Update on change management process	• Safety of UNHCR staff	

	Resumed Session (2 October)
PROGRAMME AND FUNDING MATTERS	• Overview of UNHCR activities including addenda on expenditure; review of budgetary and post requirements; update on programme and funding; report of the ACABQ; donor contributions • Proposal for UNHCR budget structure
FINANCIAL MATTERS	• Voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner: Accounts for the year 1997 • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 1997 • Measures taken or proposed in response to the recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors
PROTECTION/ PROGRAMME POLICY ISSUES	• Reintegration
OVERSIGHT ISSUES	• Implementing partners compliance with audit certification
MANAGEMENT, FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES MATTERS	• Update on change management

Forty-ninth Session of the Executive Committee 5 - 9 October

STANDING COMMITTEE DOCUMENTATION ISSUED DURING 1998

10th Meeting (2-3 February 1998)

EC/48/SC/CRP.1	Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) to the General Assembly at its Fifty-Second Session on the Financial Reports and Audited Financial Statements, and Reports of the Board of Auditors
EC/48/SC/CRP.2	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/48/SC/CRP.3	Update on Regional Developments in Central Asia, South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East
EC/48/SC/CRP.3/Add.1	Operational Maps
EC/48/SC/CRP.4	Overall Programme and Funding Projections for 1997 and 1998
EC/48/SC/CRP.5	Audit Follow-up: Procurement and Asset Management
EC/48/SC/CRP.6	Update on Project Delphi

11th Meeting (28-29 April 1998)

EC/48/SC/CRP.7	Draft Report of the Tenth Meeting of the Standing Committee (2-3 February 1998)
EC/48/SC/CRP.8	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/48/SC/CRP.9 and Corr.1	Update on Regional Developments in Europe
EC/48/SC/CRP.10	Update on Regional Developments in the former Yugoslavia
EC/48/SC/CRP.11	Update on Programme and Funding Projections for 1998
EC/48/SC/CRP.12	Review of General Programmes
EC/48/SC/CRP.13	Follow-up to the Secretary-General's United Nations Reform Proposals and Related ECOSOC Decisions
EC/48/SC/CRP.14	Oversight Issues : Consultants
EC/48/SC/CRP.15	Oversight Issues : Reintegration
EC/48/SC/CRP.16	Summary of the Synopsis Report on the *Review of UNHCR's Phase-Out Strategies: Case Studies in Selected Countries of Origin*
EC/48/SC/CRP.17	Update on the Change Management Process
EC/48/SC/CRP.18	Overhead Costs of International NGO Partners

EC/48/SC/CRP.19	Staff Training in UNHCR: An Update on Recent Developments
EC/48/SC/CRP.20	Information Note on Income and Expenditure for the Year 1997

12th meeting (23-25 June 1998)

EC/48/SC/CRP.21	Draft Report of the Eleventh Meeting of the Standing Committee (28-29 April 1998)
EC/48/SC/CRP.22	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/48/SC/CRP.23	Update on Developments in the Southern African Region
EC/48/SC/CRP.24	Update on Regional Developments in the Central, East and West Africa
EC/48/SC/CRP.25 and Corr.1	Update on Developments in the Great Lakes Region of Africa
EC/48/SC/CRP.26	Update on Programme and Funding Projections for 1998 and Tentative Estimates for the 1999 General Programmes Target
EC/48/SC/CRP.27	Note on International Protection
EC/48/SC/CRP.28	Note on Resettlement of Refugees with Special Needs
EC/48/SC/CRP.29	Composite Flows and the Relationship to Refugee Outflows, Including Return of Persons not in Need of International Protection, as well as Facilitation of Return in its Global Dimension
EC/48/SC/CRP.30	Audit Follow-up: Financial Management and Programme Management
EC/48/SC/CRP.31	Note on Safety of UNHCR Staff
EC/48/SC/CRP.32	Progress Report on Informal Consultations on the Provision of International Protection to all who Need it

13th meeting (8-9 September 1998 and 2 October 1998)

EC/48/SC/CRP.33	Draft Report of the Twelfth Meeting of the Standing Committee (23-25 June 1998)
EC/48/SC/CRP.34/Rev.1	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/48/SC/CRP.35	Refugee Registration and Statistics
EC/48/SC/CRP.36	Update on Regional Developments in the Americas
EC/48/SC/CRP.37	Update on Regional Developments in Asia and the Pacific

EC/48/SC/CRP.38	Refugee Children and Adolescents, Including Follow-up to the 1997 Evaluation and Report on Implementation of the Machel Study
EC/48/SC/CRP.39	The Situation of Older Refugees
EC/48/SC/CRP.40	Economic and Social Impact of Massive Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries, as well as other Countries: a Quantitative Assessment on the Basis of Special Case Studies
EC/48/SC/CRP.41	Implementing Partners Compliance with Audit Certification
EC/48/SC/CRP.42	Consultations on Reintegration
EC/47/SC/CRP.43	Proposal on UNHCR Budget Structure
EC/48/SC/CRP.44	Update on the Change Management Process